from the mid and south Tapti fields to the Management Committee (MC) of the field. The plan would be implemented after approval by MC.

(c) On the request of the State Government of Gujarat, an "in principle" allocation of natural gas to the extent of 2.25 Million Standard Cubic Metres per Day (MMSCMD) was made for the power project at Pipavav in Gujarat. The allocation is subject to the additional development of the field for which the development plan has now been submitted. However, the JV is allowed direct marketing of the additional gas from the Tapti field at market-related prices in terms of the Production Sharing Contract. Therefore, the Pipavav project developers have been asked to directly approach the JV concerned to tie-up the gas required for their proposed project. The JV have been asked to give priority in supplies to units that have been given "in principle" allocations.

Promotion of Bio-diesel

†*15. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have taken a policy decision on the proposal to propagate the use of bio-diesel as a fuel of the future;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) With a view to propagating and promoting the increased use of bio-diesel in transport fuel, bio-diesel is being produced mainly on a pilot scale and field trials are being conducted by oil marketing companies to establish efficacy of bio-diesel and diesel blend in the transport sector. The Planning Commission had set up a Committee on Development of Bio-fuel which recommended the launching of a National Mission on Bio-diesel with a special focus on the plantation of Jatropha curcas. The Ministry of Rural Development has been made the nodal Ministry for the National Mission on Bio-diesel and that Ministry has recently got a Detailed Project Report prepared by The Energy and Research Institute (TERI).

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Protection of small investors

*16. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI R.K. ANAND:

Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the special efforts being proposed to help the small investors in the share market; and

(b) the details of the steps which are being taken against vanishing companies under the Criminal Law?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): (a) A number of steps have been taken by the Government to help the small investors, *viz.*

An "Investor Education & Protection Fund" (IEPF) has been set-up under section 205 C of the Companies Act, 1956 for promotion of investor awareness, education and protection of interests of investors. A comprehensive campaign has been undertaken to empower the small investor through education.

An "Investor Protection Cell" has been set up in the Ministry of Company Affairs and its field offices to redress the grievances of investors. A new system of on-line filing of complaints by investors and depositors against defaulting companies has been launched by the Ministry in January, 2005, for prompt response to their grievances.

Comprehensive revision of the Companies Act, 1956 is being done. Measures to effectively protect the interests of small investors are integral part of the proposed legislation.

Further, SEBI has taken a series of measures for the small investors which include strengthening of the entry norms for companies accessing primary market, making the disclosure norms in offer documents more stringent, policy changes in the primary issuances including new definition of retail individual investor and review of the book-building guidelines.

(b) Besides taking action under various provisions of Companies Act, 1956 for non-compliance, action under the Criminal Law has also been taken against the Vanishing Companies and their Promoters/ Directors. To that end, a model First Information Report (FIR) has been developed in consultation with the Securities and Exchange Board of India